

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3539

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 2929

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, PA

SUBJECT: LIBERALS PLAN TO CHALLENGE GOVERNMENT IN LAINO CASE

REF: ASUNCION 2891

1. MRS. LAINO, ACCOMPANIED BY HER HUSBAND'S THREE LAWYERS, CALLED ON THE AMBASSADOR JULY 19. THEY PRESENTED A COPY OF THE CHARGE SHEET AGAINST LAINO, DATED JULY 12, WHICH THE POLICE SENT TO JUDGE ANTONIO ESCOBAR CANTERM BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: THE CHARGE SHEET CONTAINS NOTHING MORE THAN THE INFORMATION ALREADY PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSPAPERS AND REPORTED PARAGRAPH 2 REFTEL. A XEROX COPY OF THE PAGES OF A REPORT BY THE INTERNAL SECURITY COMMITTEE OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TITLED "AMERICA'S MAOISTS, THE REVOLUTIONARY UNION, THE VENCEREMOS ORGANIZATION" AND DATED JUNE 22, 1972 IS ATTACHED AS AN ANNEX TO THE CHARGE SHEET. AT THE TOP OF PAGE 141 IS AN ENTRY, WHICH APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SUPERIMPOSED OVER AN ORIGINAL ENTRY, REGARDING A MARY LOUISE GREENBERG, NEE MACKINLEY. THE DOCTORED ENTRY REFERS TO TESTIMONY THAT MRS. GREENBERG WAS ALLEGEDLY AND EXTREMELY RADICAL AND MILITANT MEMBER OF AN ORGANIZATION CALLED THE REVOLUTIONARY UNION. THE ENTRY DOES NOT INDICATE THAT MRS. GREEN BERG IS ALSO KNOWN AS JO MARIE GRESGRABER OF WOLA BUT THE POLICE CHARGE SHEET TRIES TO MAKE THE CONNECTION. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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2. AFTER ASSERTING THAT THE CHARGES ARE RIDICULOUS (AS THEY ARE), THE GROUP SAID THAT, AFTER DISCUSSING THE MATTER WITH DOMINGO LAINO, THEIR PLAN IS TO DEFY THE GOP WHEN LAINO APPEARS BEFORE THE JUDGE TO MAKE HIS FIRST DECLARATION. THEY ARE PLANNING FOR HIM TO STATE THAT THE CHARGES ARE GROUNDLESS, THAT HE WAS PHYSICALLY MISTREATED UNDER DETENTION AND THAT HE REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE THE LEGALITY

OF THE COURT BECAUSE THE JUDGE IS NOT IMPARTIAL, BEING A HIGH OFFICIAL OF THE COLORADO PARTY WHOSE PHOTO APPEARED IN THE PRESS TODAY AT A COLORADO CONCLAVE, THAT HE IS UNDER FULL AUTHORITY OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THAT THEREFORE THE TRIAL IS MERELY AN ILLEGAL POLITICAL ACT OF VENGEANCE ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT. THEY PRODUCED A COPY OF THE JULY 19 "PATRIA" CARRYING A PICTURE OF JUDGE ESCOBAR WITH A COLORADO SCARF, AROUND HIS NECK ATTENDING A COLORADO PARTY POLITICAL MEETING WITH JUSTICE AND LABOR MINISTER, SAUL GONZALEZ.

3. COMMENT: THE POLICE CHARGE SHEET IS ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE IN ITS LACK OF EVIDENCE AND UNSUBSTANTIATED CHARGES. IF LAINO DOES DEFEY THE GOP, AS HE IS APPARENTLY PLANNING TO DO, IT WILL BE AN ACT OF GREAT POLITICAL COURAGE WHICH THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY ANSWERING, ESPECIALLY IF HE RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION FOR UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGE TO THE STROESSNER REGIME. LAINO'S WIFE AND LAWYERS ARE WELL AWARE THAT HIS LIFE MAY BE IN JEOPARDY, WHETHER SENTENCED TO A LONG PRISON TERM OR RELEASED FOR LACK OF EVIDENCE, AS THE GOVERNMENT MAY NOW BE PLANNING TO DO TO END THE MOUNTING CONTROVERSY OVER ITS INCREDIBLY INEPT HANDLING OF THIS AFFAIR. ONE OF THE LAINO LAWYERS EVEN SUGGESTED THAT HIS CLIENT WOULD BE SAFER IN JAIL, AS A GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY WITH CONTINUING FOREIGN SCRUTINY, THAN RELEASED SOON AND SUBJECT TO AN ARRANGED ACCIDENT. THEY SAID LAINO HAS BEEN WARNED BY HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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CAPTORS, IN GUARANI, "YOU MIGHT GET OUT THIS TIME BUT WE'LL GET YOU LATER." WE REFUSED TO COUNSEL MRS. LAINO AND THE LAWYERS BUT URGED THEM TO GIVE CAREFUL THOUGHT TO THE IMPACT ON THE SLOW IMPROVEMENT OF HUMANRIGHTS PRACTICES IN THE COUNTRY AND THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY, AS WELL AS DR. LAINO'S OWN WELFARE, IN DECIDING HOW TO RESPOND.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT VERIFYING WHETHER AN ENTRY REGARDING MARY LOUISE GREENBERG APPEARS ON PAGE 141 OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REPORT ABOVE AND WHETHER OR NOT THERE IS ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN THIS PERSON AND JO MARIE GRIESGRABER OF WOLA. WHITE

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